Quality Improvement Agency

Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme

SIX APPROACHES TO POST-16 CITIZENSHIP

6. Citizenship through research projects

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Introduction

Different approaches to delivering post-16 citizenship

Six distinct, but related, approaches to post-16 citizenship have been identified.[1]

Examples of each can be found in all the post-16 education and training settings, including the informal sector, although the approaches may be implemented in somewhat different ways in various contexts. Young people led, active learning is a crucial underlying principle of effective practice across the approaches and in all settings.

The approaches are: *Citizenship through*

1. learner voice and representation

2. qualifications and personalised programmes

3. group tutorial and enrichment programmes

4. voluntary and community-based activities

5. single events

6. research projects

Each title in this series of six booklets will examine and illustrate one of the above approaches. However, in practice it is desirable, and indeed common, that organisations combine several different forms of provision to ensure, for as many young people as possible, a range of citizenship learning opportunities. Undertaking a variety of citizenship activities will also help learners to reinforce their citizenship learning and recognise its usefulness in different arenas.

What is post-16 citizenship?

Citizenship enables young people to learn about their rights and responsibilities, to understand how society works, and develop knowledge and understanding of social and political issues. Through citizenship education young people are encouraged to take action on issues of concern to themselves and to play an active part in the democratic process, thereby becoming more effective members of society. They are encouraged to express their views, to have a voice and make a difference to the communities in which they operate, and to reflect on what they have learnt.[2]

Whichever approach is used, it is essential that learners experience the key opportunities for post-16 citizenship learning in order to:

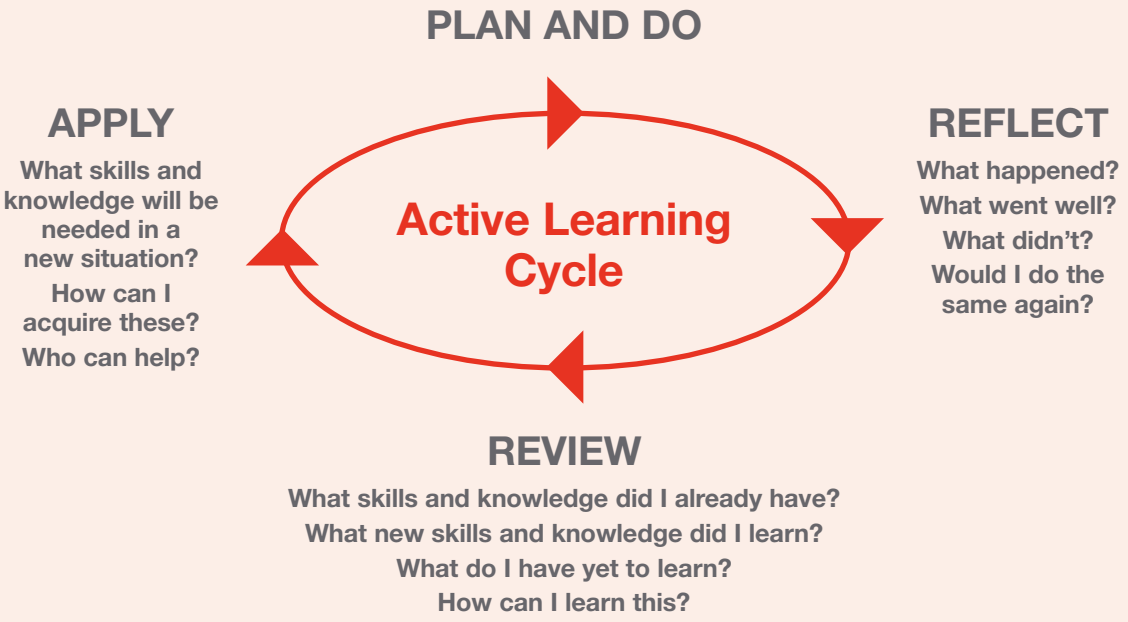
1. identify, investigate and think critically about citizenship issues, problems or events of concern to them
2. decide on and take part in follow-up action, where appropriate
3. reflect on, recognise and review their citizenship learning.[3]

Why do citizenship post-16?

There are clear benefits for the young people themselves and the organisations in which they learn. The young people show increased confidence and self-esteem, a greater interest in the world around them, an ability to get things changed, knowledge about 'the system', experience of taking part in challenging and worthwhile activities, and a more positive attitude. The organisation gains constructive involvement of staff and learners in decision-making, and more motivated learners, leading to increased retention and achievement and better relations with the local community. Moreover, citizenship can provide some coherence in an organisation's response to many of the educational initiatives outlined on pages 19–20.

Teaching and learning strategies

Citizenship education can be delivered effectively post-16 in a variety of ways, either as discrete, specially-designed activities, or as part of existing courses and programmes. However it is delivered, the most effective teaching and learning strategies involve active participation by young people, engaging collaboratively with real issues, selected by them. The activities should be led and owned by the young people and should be stimulating and fun. The Post-16 Citizenship Development Programme (see page 18) provided examples of citizenship through, for example art, photography, video making, role play/simulations, websites, music, newsletters, radio stations, discussions and debates, conferences, exhibitions, graffiti walls, banners, dance, comedy, drama, investigations, surveys, and campaigns. Experience of the Development Programme, and indeed the findings of the external evaluation[4] and Ofsted reports[5] all point to the importance of active learning in citizenship education. Active learning involves learning by doing and then learners reflecting on their activities, so that they can develop knowledge and understanding from their own experiences. They identify, review and summarise their learning and then apply it to new situations.



Active learning also involves a dialogue and interaction with others. It is clearly an important learning strategy for active citizenship because it develops many of the skills required, including:

- ability to empathise with others' points of view
- critical thinking to weigh evidence
- ability to form considered opinions and communicate them
- confidence and interpersonal skills to engage with others to effect change.

However, not all active learning is necessarily citizenship learning. Citizenship learning involves knowledge and understanding of social and political issues, so the context of the activity is important.

Why should young people get involved?

Citizenship research projects can be undertaken by individuals or by groups. Involving young people in choosing the citizenship issues to investigate gives their work relevance and increases their motivation. Projects enable them to work at their own pace and level and can be fitted into any length of programme or activity. They encourage learners to explore an issue in greater depth or breadth and to develop and apply skills that are valued in further and higher education, training and employment. Projects also provide opportunities for young people to act as researchers for others.

'The most important part for me was to learn new things myself on the various issues but also about getting my friends and local young people in the community on projects that will open their minds...'
Youth volunteer

'It's given me everything from basic admin skills to how to work with other organisations. It inspired me to work with other young people and I now work in local schools as a mentor.'
Peer researcher

'My confidence grew enormously and we gained a huge amount of knowledge about drugs, training, opinion gathering, research techniques and the importance of being active members of the community.'
Peer researcher

'Citizenship projects enable young people to take ownership of issues of importance to them – and to find out what they can do on a local, national, even a global scale, to make a difference and form opinions – projects can raise their self-esteem and develop interpersonal skills, especially teamwork, communication and commitment.'
Citizenship tutor

Projects are a key element of the Government's 14–19 reform agenda. The 14–19 White Paper (DfES, February 2005) set out the Government's expectations for the introduction of extended projects at level 3, in both general programmes, alongside 'A' levels, and in 14–19 Diplomas. The aim is to stretch all young people and test a range of higher-level skills, including a high degree of planning, preparation, research and autonomous working, and persistence over time. Within the new Diplomas, the first five lines of learning for which will be available to consortia successful in the gateway application process from 2008, projects will also be a requirement at levels 1 and 2, as well as level 3.

Level 3 extended projects are being piloted from autumn 2006 to summer 2008 in both general and vocational programmes.

Pilot of extended projects

Building on a trial of a project-based qualification in Active Citizenship Studies, AQA, in collaboration with City & Guilds, and Edexcel awarding bodies have been commissioned by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) to develop level 3 Extended Project pilot qualifications.

Learners following general and vocational programmes may opt to do one of five types of project: active citizenship; dissertation; investigation/field study; performance; or making an artefact. Projects may develop and extend a learner's study area(s), or an interest or activity outside of their main programme.

There are four assessment objectives that detail the knowledge, skills and understanding the learner is required to demonstrate:

- Manage – identify, design, plan and complete the individual project or task within a group project, applying organisation skills and strategies to meet stated objectives
- Use Resources – obtain and select information from a range of sources, analyse data, apply relevantly and demonstrate understanding of any appropriate linkages, connections and complexities of their topic
- Develop and Realise – select and use a range of skills, including new technologies, to solve problems, to take decisions critically, creatively and flexibly, and to achieve planned outcomes
- Review – evaluate outcomes, including own learning and performance, select and use a range of communication skills and media to convey and present outcomes and conclusions.

Apart from subject specific learning, citizenship projects help with the development of a wide range of skills, including functional skills in English, mathematics and ICT as well as other personal, learning and thinking skills.

Functional skills, like the current key skills, will provide learners with 'the skills and abilities they need to take an active and responsible role in their communities'[6]. For example, they develop communication, technology and mathematical skills that 'make learners effective and involved as citizens' by being able to 'operate confidently, interpret information and situations and convey their ideas and opinions clearly'.

The QCA Framework of Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTs)[7] includes a skill set – 'effective participation' – which is central to citizenship learning, as well as other skills that contribute to the success of citizenship projects.

The framework of personal, learning and thinking skills, 11–19 (QCA)

This framework sets out six skill sets necessary for work and general learning:

- independent enquiry
- creative thinking
- reflective learning
- team working
- self-management
- effective participation.

All of these skills are relevant to active citizenship, but the effective participator skill set focuses specifically on the abilities of young people to 'actively engage with issues that affect them and those around them, so they play a full part in the life of their school, college, workplace or wider community by taking responsible action to bring improvements for others as well as themselves'.

Young people are expected to:

- discuss issues of concern, seeking resolution where needed
- present a persuasive case for action
- propose practical ways forward, breaking these down into manageable steps
- identify improvements that would benefit others as well as themselves
- try to influence others, negotiating and balancing diverse views to reach workable solutions
- act as an advocate for views and beliefs that may differ from their own.

Types of research project

Citizenship research projects are about having a positive effect on the quality of people's lives. They are about seeking improvements, both for the individual and for public and political reasons.

All citizenship research projects should offer opportunities to:

- develop knowledge and understanding of the citizenship topic, including relevant citizenship concepts, through, for example, wider reading and discussions. Specific inputs may also be helpful in lessons/training sessions and/or group tutorials
- develop skills in project development and management, including use of source material and other resources, and research-specific skills in collecting, organising and analysing data
- review and reflect on project processes and outcomes, including own learning
- present findings and conclusions in appropriate media, drawing on the evaluation of evidence.

It is especially important that citizenship research involves action of some kind, with the aim of bringing about change for the better.

Projects can, however, take different forms, involving for example:

- **reviewing the literature** and other documentary evidence in exploring a research question, thinking critically about data from different sources and writing up the findings and conclusions in a report and using it to increase others' awareness of different perspectives on the issue to influence opinions.
- exploring a citizenship issue through preparing for and putting on a **performance**, with individuals researching and thinking critically about aspects of the issue, informed by wider reading and discussions, keeping a log of own learning and exchanging feedback with others during rehearsals to help develop the performance. The action could be influencing views on the issue of others involved in the performance, as participants or audience.
- conducting a **practical investigation** by identifying a research question or hypothesis, collecting and analysing data from the field, thinking critically about findings and putting these findings into a wider context (for example through internet research), and using multi-media to present findings and conclusions. The action could be using the findings in a campaign to bring about change.
- developing a **product or service** by identifying an objective, researching ideas and information (for example on client needs, similar products/services, legal, health and safety regulations) to inform design work, testing out ideas, gathering feedback from others and refining the design, keeping a log of activities and reflections, and evaluating and presenting the outcomes. The action could be working with a community organisation to make use of the product/service for the benefit of others.

Reviewing and reporting on the literature

Young people at Community Service Volunteers carried out research into the historical and contested nature of citizenship by exploring the literature on citizenship rights and responsibilities and how they came about. They presented and discussed their findings with a group of young people from Poland. Subsequently, they went on an exchange visit to bring their learning to life.

At Newcastle College, citizenship, as part of the general studies syllabus, engaged students in research projects on a range of themes, such as cultural diversity and globalisation. The research, oral presentations and written work also provided evidence for level 3 key skills and met most of the QCA learning objectives. When coupled with active learning, such as the production of a student newsletter, participation in the Oxford University Debate, and work as peer mentors, students were able to make effective links between theoretical learning and practice. Tutorials were used to promote citizenship awareness.

Performances

Performing arts have been used to directly engage students at Islington Sixth Form College with citizenship issues and give them an insight into the importance of being active citizens. Projects included the production of a play to raise moral and political issues.

The play *The Visit* (Friedrich Duerrenmatt, 1956) explores the central notion of individual and social and moral responsibility. The production brought together 70 students who all became involved in the issues and dilemmas of the play and their relevance today, whether as actors or behind the scenes. Students researched the political background to the play in workshops and during rehearsals structured debates were held on the issues. The play was performed over four nights to around 500 people from the local community.

Other research projects involved music. Students worked in small groups developing their songs in writing workshops, using press material and photographs, and research on other songs with political messages, to stimulate debate – the students wanted to 'bring the big citizenship themes to their everyday experience'. One example was a rap written by students on current politics. This involved researching the policies of the three main political parties and students' expressing their views on these policies. Politicians attended the launch event and CDs were produced of the performance. The process of producing the songs encouraged self-appraisal and a wish to know more about major issues.

A practical investigation

A group of marine engineering apprentices, at ITE Ltd, Dorset, were worried about environmental damage from marine pollution. The project included a taught component and Internet research on different types of pollutants, worldwide, and their impact on the environment. A field study was then designed and conducted along a stretch of coast. This involved the collection and categorisation of different types of debris found on the beach and an analysis of seawater. Beach users were also interviewed. Data was entered and analysed using Excel software. Key findings were put on PowerPoint slides, illustrated by photographs and pie charts, with conclusions and recommendations and a presentation to an invited audience. Individuals were assessed on the basis of their contributions to the research project, knowledge of the citizenship issue and key skills. All key skills were covered.

As part of the project, the group made an effort to disseminate their findings more widely and to lobby key organisations, such as the local authority and boat owners, to raise awareness of the issue and try to reduce the level of pollution on their local beaches.

A product or service

E2E learners at Warwickshire College had a taught unit (OCN Citizenship, level 1) covering basic political and social issues like rights, responsibilities and equal opportunities and introductory activities as a prelude to deciding on their project topics and planning their projects (including a risk assessment). One group decided to work with the local Connexions office to research and improve the service offered to young people with family problems. It was found that some young people were finding it hard to get information on social services and benefits. After several meetings the learners worked with Connexions to design a leaflet for young people facing personal difficulties. The learners used video to record their involvement in the project, to inform others and to act as a record of achievement. The video was part of the evaluation and inspired individuals involved in the project to ‘put pen to paper’ as evidence for their OCN unit.

Students at Aylesbury High School designed and developed a citizenship intranet for the benefit of peers in their sixth form. This project involved researching the interests of their peers and information for the site on topics such as ‘how to volunteer’, ‘how to contact the government’, and information about organisations such as Greenpeace and Amnesty International.

Citizenship research projects: good practice principles

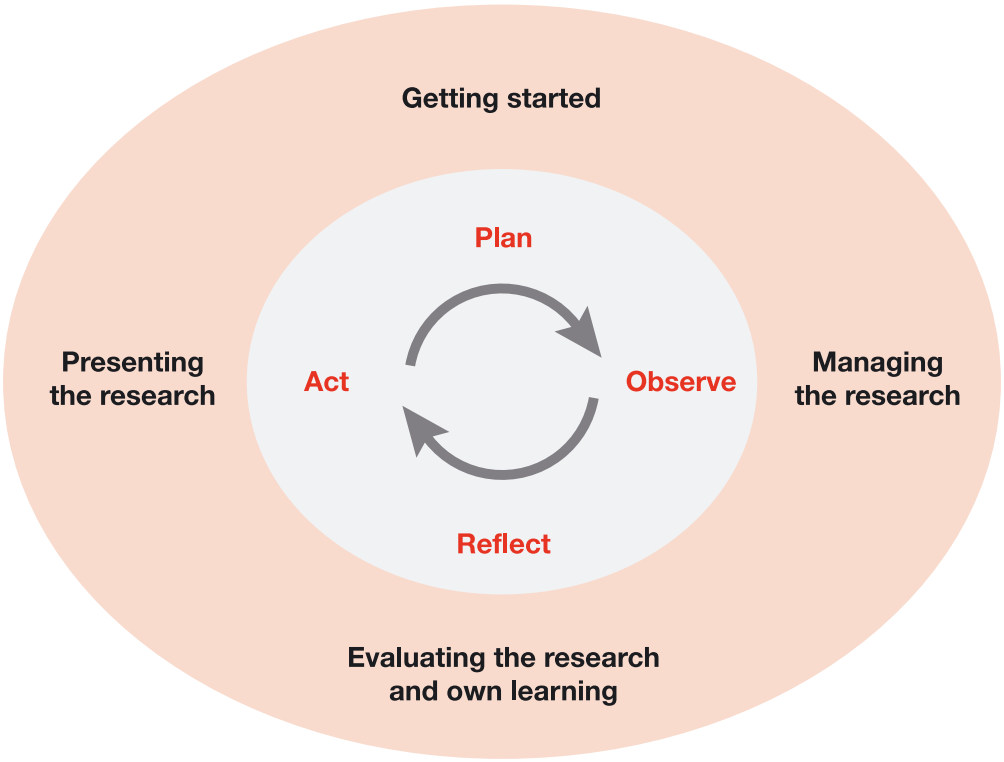
Citizenship research projects:

- inform the researcher and others about real political, social, economic or environmental issues
- involve a strong personal commitment to the topic and to taking some action to bring about change or influence things
- take account of social, moral and ethical considerations
- involve the researcher(s) in being aware of their own position on the issue and how their values – what they believe in – and action may influence the research and impact on others
- involve working with others and being open to the viewpoints of others who may, or may not, share the researcher's beliefs
- require the researcher(s) to be realistic and informed about what can be achieved within the available time and resources
- require the researcher(s) to be flexible and open to changes that may be needed as the research proceeds.

Some key messages for researchers

Doing research projects: the stages involved

Each stage of the research process involves working through cycles of planning, observing (information collecting), reflecting and acting.



If the research project is being undertaken as part of a qualification or award, there will be guidelines, for example about choice of topic, structure and presentation of findings, and criteria for assessment that have to be met.

All projects benefit from careful planning to help ensure they are manageable and achieve their objectives, but young people may be keener to start 'doing things', such as carrying out some fieldwork, or may become more interested in researching an issue having participated, for example, in a community event or visit. It is important in citizenship research to engage young people in issues of concern to them and to use active learning methods to retain their interest and motivation. Enthusiasm for practical activity can be used to inform thinking about the research process, for instance participating in a community event could be used to identify different groups of people who could be asked their views and to think about ways their views could be collected and questions to ask.

Citizenship research is not a linear process. The outcomes of each stage below may require re-visiting and making changes to the original plan and re-negotiating with others during the research process as to how the project proceeds. The main stages are:

Getting started: choosing a research topic, deciding on priorities and planning the project

Managing the research: setting things up, using resources, monitoring progress, organising and making sense of the data

Evaluating and presenting the research: reviewing the research process and own learning, and going public.

Getting Started

Choosing the research topic

Ideally, the topic of the research should be decided by the young people – an issue, problem or event they feel strongly concerned about. It could be a local issue being highlighted in the media, such as plans to change the use of a piece of land, or close a youth centre, or relate to an issue of national or international importance, such as sustainable development or world poverty.

The topics may arise from the main programme being followed by learners, for example aspects of a general or vocational subject an individual or group would like to follow up in more depth or breadth, or from an area of personal interest.

'It can take a long time for our E2E learners to decide on what projects to undertake, even after the taught element and introductory activities... To clarify their thoughts we got them to generate ideas by shouting out things they thought were relevant and important. Putting these key words up on the wall facilitated discussion and eventually helped them to decide.'
Training manager

Deciding on priorities

Young people may have a broad topic they wish to research, but it is important to keep the project manageable within the available time and resources. Individuals who wish to work together may like to research different aspects of the same topic. But it will be important for each member of the group to have a clear role to play in contributing to the project.

At this stage it is helpful for researchers to spend time doing some initial investigation to inform their decisions – discover more about the topic and citizenship concepts of relevance to it, including further reading, Internet searches and discussions with others. They may need specific sessions to help develop their conceptual understanding of citizenship and the particular topic such as the concepts of power and authority, including the power relations of researchers and research participants, rights and responsibilities, democracy, equality, diversity and justice.

'We were able to set out our expectations of how we wanted to be treated by people in power... I believe we are now being treated as equals and our views welcomed and respected by adults.'
College student involved in a research project on drugs involving 200 students in discussions and questionnaires

Researchers will find it useful later when it comes to the reporting stage to keep a record of sources of information used during this initial investigation and brief findings – using a notebook, index cards, ICT or an audio record. Record-keeping skills are essential to a successful research project, and opportunities will be needed to learn and practise these skills.

Deciding priorities also requires thinking through the main question(s) the researcher wants to answer through their research, the hypothesis they wish to test or objective to be met.

Title and scope

If young people are doing a research project as part of an award or qualification, it is likely that there will be guidelines to help them focus their project, and perhaps broad themes to choose from. They may need to develop a project proposal and gain formal approval.

Even if a formal proposal is not required, it will still be helpful for the researcher(s) to think through initial ideas for taking forward their research, such as possible methods for obtaining information, timescales and resources that may be needed, to gain an idea of the scope of their project.

Planning the research project

When turning initial ideas into a plan, it is important to keep in mind the improvements it is hoped to make through the research, including a change for the better, decisions influenced, or other people's awareness raised about an issue.

Consideration should also be given to learning objectives and learners' starting points. Most types of citizenship research projects will provide scope for individuals to meet at least some of the 10 learning objectives set out in the Framework for Citizenship Learning (QCA, 2004), including offering opportunities to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues
- show understanding of key citizenship concepts
- consider the social, moral and ethical issues applying to a particular situation
- analyse sources of information, identify bias and draw conclusions
- discuss and debate citizenship issues
- express and justify a personal opinion to others.

If working towards a qualification or award, planning will also need to consider the assessment criteria that have to be met.

Other people with an interest in the project will need to be involved at various times in the planning process, for example:

- co-researchers – members of a group working on aspects of the same topic, or others who may be involved in observing an event, surveying people for their views will need to be involved from an early stage
- a tutor or project supervisor – will be a key person to consult from the start, for guidance and support
- participants in the research – will need to be involved in some way in the planning of interviews, surveys or observed events
- others – specialists, providing expert advice on the research topic area and critical friends offering constructive feedback will also need to be consulted over plans for their involvement.

Citizenship research is about working *with* others.

What needs to be done?

The planning process involves thinking through what needs to be done by when, who needs to do it and the resources needed. Young people will need support in doing this, the extent of support depending upon their previous experience of research projects and level of confidence. However, part of the aim of projects is to develop learners' ability to work independently and take responsibility for decision-making. If working towards a qualification or award, providing too much support and guidance could result in candidates not being able to meet the assessment criteria.

'The group put a plan together including how they would budget for the project. Our only input was to make sure that there were no health and safety implications, but we did get the learners to do their own risk assessment as part of the planning.'

Training manager

The diagram on the next page offers a template for the planning process. It can be adapted to suit different types of project.

Research Project Outline Plan

Project focus
Research question/hypothesis/objective

Research project title

Project supervisor:

co-researchers:

Critical friends:

Specialists:

Timeline: **by whom/when:**

Getting started: setting-up stage

- Obtain permission
- Identify research participants
- Design research instruments
- Set-up project management system

Resources needed:

by whom/when:

Project management stage

- Collect data
- Organise and analyse data
- Review progress
- Complete other tasks

Resources needed:

by whom/when:

Evaluation/presentation stage

- Review project
- Review own learning
- Prepare presentation
- Present findings

Resources needed:

Managing the research

Knowledge of project management processes and a range of skills (particularly organisational and problem solving skills) will be required especially for:

- **setting up the arrangements for the research**, e.g. obtaining access to information sources; designing research/fieldwork instruments, performance or product/service briefs; setting up a system for managing data, recording processes
- **collecting and organising data**, e.g. from literature reviews, discussions, fieldwork, product/service design and testing processes, performance development
- **analysing and making sense of the data**, e.g. sifting, discarding and selecting data, displaying data using, for example descriptions, quotes, charts, graphs, photographs, video clips; identifying themes/patterns; drawing conclusions with evidence to support them
- **monitoring and reviewing progress**, e.g. monitoring use of time and other resources, the extent to which the project is on track to meet deadlines and budget; reflecting on own learning; exchanging constructive feedback from others.

Evaluating and presenting the research

Evaluation

Evaluation of citizenship research projects covers reviewing the project processes and outcomes, and the researcher's own citizenship learning.

When evaluating the research project it is important for researchers to refer back to:

- their research question, hypothesis or objective – to identify the extent to which the question has been answered, hypothesis proved or objective has been met
- original plan – to identify what went well and not so well, what could have been done differently.

It is to be expected that changes will have occurred to the plan – making improvements is a key feature of citizenship research projects – and these changes should be acknowledged.

But the identification of researchers' citizenship learning, including the extent to which they have met their citizenship learning objectives, developed personally and changed their understanding of the issue, is just as important as other research outcomes.

Evaluation of the project and citizenship learning is assisted by obtaining constructive feedback from others, for example the project supervisor, critical friend(s) and co-researchers. Participants in the research will also have an important contribution to make.

Presentation

All citizenship research projects should make findings and conclusions public – to bring the research to life for others so they can learn from it, and to bring about change. Decisions about style and format will depend on the purpose for presenting the research and the type of project. If needed as evidence for a qualification or award, there will be guidelines, for example, on the structure and length of the report and/or oral presentation required.

A written report or paper, and/or an oral presentation, are the most common forms of presenting research findings. To make these more interesting, graphs, charts and tables can be used, or multi-media. However, there are other ways of presenting research, for example a poster, graffiti board, website, a display of photographs, a performance or video.

An inclusive multi-themed approach to project work

Students from all curriculum areas of Hull college and at all levels of the programme have produced a variety of project work on the themes of local democracy, equality and diversity and sustainability. They were expected to set out their objectives, produce a plan, keep a journal of their activities and critically appraise their projects and achievements. An event was used to present learning in different ways: dance pieces on recycling, a thought-provoking rap on sustainability, display of artwork, sculptures using recycled materials, models and PowerPoint presentations, as well as photo and video surveys of the college's energy use.

Cultural diversity

Trainee mechanics at Camden Jobtrain researched the topic of cultural diversity. The tutor used art to encourage them to think about the topic.

Trainees attended citizenship sessions on cultural diversity and identity, looking at the work of Asian artists and considering how their work reflected cultural diversity and political messages. These sessions involved discussions and debates about the topic that spurred the trainees on to produce their own art. The outcomes of their investigations were presented by painting a car to illustrate what they had learnt from the project.

With visual forms of presenting findings, it is helpful to include a written or taped commentary to explain the ideas and research behind the performance or display.

Assessment of research projects

To show what has been learnt in working towards the citizenship learning objectives, a wide range of evidence of skills, knowledge and understanding can be used, as well as the final presentation (report, service, product or performance). Examples include written material produced during the project such as notes and other records in a paper-based or electronic journal or diary; photographs; audio or video tape clips; records or witness statements of others who have observed the development of a service, performance, presentation or product. Assessment can be informal, and could be peer-based, or lead to formal accreditation.

Training in the skills required for research projects

It cannot be assumed that young people know how to carry out all the tasks involved in a research project without some training. They will need opportunities to develop their knowledge of research processes and methods, as well as knowledge relating to the topic, and also to:

- identify the skills required
- develop these skills through various activities and interventions
- practise skills in different tasks and receive constructive feedback, for example in 'low-risk' situations within their centre
- consolidate and apply skills in wider, higher-risk situations
- review and reflect on their skills.

The publication *A Case for action? Skills for active citizenship research* (available from **www.post16citizenship.org**) offers activities to support skill development.

Examples of skills include:

- project management – skills in designing, planning, negotiating, organising
- using resources – skills in obtaining and analysing data from a range of sources
- project development – skills in ICT, critical thinking, decision-making, problem solving, working with others
- reviewing – skills in reflecting on and evaluating the project and own learning
- presentation – skills in communicating findings and conclusions in appropriate media.

Training in peer research

Young people volunteering at Fitzrovia Youth in Action (FYA) participated initially in training for peer researchers run by the National Council for Voluntary and Youth Services. They also sought advice from the Association for Research in the Voluntary and Community Sector and received further training in recruiting project volunteers. The group then led residential workshops to identify issues of concern to young people, and set up a project to consult young people in the local community on the issue of drugs.

Recognising their need to gain some specialist knowledge, they contacted relevant organisations and Addaction Impact was enlisted for drug-awareness training. Funding was secured from the Camden Council drugs action team for training in research techniques. A questionnaire was used for gathering opinions followed by interviews with over 350 young people in youth clubs and a secondary school.

Believing that making a difference means making sure opinions are heard, the peer researchers launched their research findings to practitioners and policy makers. The group was one of the first in the country to complete their Millennium Volunteers' award for their voluntary peer research and was awarded the Camden Good Citizenship Award for commitment to excellent service in the community.

Background to post-16 citizenship

Citizenship has been a statutory subject at key stages 3 and 4 in secondary schools since 2002, following the recommendations of the first advisory group on Citizenship[8], chaired by Sir Bernard Crick. The report identified three inter-related components of citizenship:

- social and moral responsibility
- community involvement
- political literacy.

It also stressed that young people should be provided with the knowledge, skills and opportunities to take responsible action and to influence decisions. The Crick report explicitly recommended that young people participate in active citizenship, in which they engage in their communities and also gain knowledge and understanding. Active citizenship is defined by the National Foundation for Educational Research[9] as being when young people are 'given the opportunity to put their citizenship understanding and skills into practice and participate in a community or public context'.

Post-16 citizenship was the focus of a further advisory group chaired by Sir Bernard Crick[10], whose report recommended that:

- *an entitlement to the development of citizenship, of which participation should be a significant component, should be established which would apply to all students and trainees in the first phase of post-compulsory education and training*
- *all such young adults should have effective opportunities to participate in activities relevant to the development of their citizenship skills and to have their achievements recognised.*

The Post-16 Citizenship Development Programme was set up in 2001 at the request of the then Secretary of State for Education and Employment and in response to this report. The Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA, now LSN) was given the responsibility for managing the programme on behalf of the DfES and, from April 2006, on behalf of the Quality Improvement Agency (QIA). The programme set up pilot projects across England to investigate the best ways to establish citizenship activities and to encourage young people to become effective citizens. Following the success of the Development Programme, QIA commissioned LSN from September 2006 to run the Support Programme for post-16 citizenship, accessible to all providers in England. The Support Programme is working with school sixth forms, sixth-form colleges, further education and tertiary colleges, training providers, employers, youth services, voluntary groups and offender educators. Its aim is to encourage providers of education and training, whatever their setting, to enable young learners to develop their citizenship knowledge, skills and understanding, and give them the opportunities to put this learning into practice.

Citizenship and wider policy development

Since 2001, citizenship has become increasingly important on many Government agendas and commands broad political support. It is recognised that giving all members of our society, including young people, a stake in their communities and an opportunity to voice their views, makes for better community relations, more stable neighbourhoods and more engaged citizens.

There are a wide range of current educational initiatives which impact on citizenship:

- The 14–19 White Paper made a renewed commitment to citizenship in the national curriculum and stressed the importance of active citizenship for the whole 14–19 age group: *'We need to be confident that everyone leaving education is equipped to be an informed, responsible, active citizen. In an ever more complex, interdependent world, where an engaged population is crucial to the health of our society, we continue to put citizenship at its heart too.'* (14–19 White Paper, DfES, February 2005).
- The 14–19 Diplomas, of which the first five lines of learning will be available to consortia successful in the gateway application process from 2008. These will provide opportunities for citizenship through the extended projects and the proposed six personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS). These include 'effective participator', which focuses on *'young people actively engaging with issues that affect them and those around them. They play a full part in the life of their school, college, workplace or wider community by taking responsible action to bring improvements for others as well as themselves.'*
- QCA and LSC are working on a strategy to bring coherence to the Foundation Learning Tier (FLT), in order to rationalise the units and qualifications available at Entry and level 1. Provision within the FLT will consist of three strands: subject-based and vocational learning; personal and social development; and skills for life and work. A set of design principles for qualifications will be published which all qualifications aimed at supporting programmes within FLT will have to meet.
- *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*, a new approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19, influences all provision. The Government's aim is for every child and young person, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and achieve economic well-being. Children and young people will have far more say about issues that affect them as individuals and collectively, and inspectors will listen to their views.
- *Youth Matters*, a Government Green Paper launched in July 2005, set out proposals designed to improve outcomes for 13–19-year-olds. It proposed that young people should have:
  - more things to do and places to go in their local area – and more choice and influence over what is available
  - more opportunities to volunteer and to make a contribution to their local community
  - better information, advice and guidance about issues that matter to them, delivered in the way they want to receive it
  - better support when they need extra help to deal with problems.

  The aim is to empower young people to shape their local services, involving them in local decision making and providing opportunities for them to give something back to their communities. The Government said: *'We know that when young people participate in decisions affecting their learning and social experience they are more likely to achieve and become active citizens.'* (**www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/youthmatters**). The Youth Opportunities Fund has been set up to provide resources (£31 million) for young people to become more involved in their communities.

- Personalised learning and learner voice, are central tenets of the FE White Paper, 'Raising Skills, Increasing Life Chances'.[11] This makes proposals for colleges, and other providers of further education and training, to *'put the learner at the heart of the learning experience'* by making improvements in advice, guidance, quality of teaching/training, pastoral support and, crucially, provision for enabling students to have their say in influencing and driving up the quality of provision available. A key recommendation arising from the *Foster Review*[12] is that all providers of further education and training should, by September 2007, have a learner involvement strategy, which is published and monitored. Personalised learning requires providers to listen to young people about how they learn best, what does and does not work for them, and to invite learners to 'co-design' the curriculum. The Gilbert report[13] brings schools into the same arena. The report recommends that Ofsted should provide clearer guidance on the expectation that schools' self-evaluation should draw on pupils' feedback, specifically on learning and teaching. The report suggests ways in which pupils could be actively engaged in shaping teaching and learning:
  - using pupils as learning resources for one another
  - inviting pupils to work with teachers in curriculum teams to review schemes of work
  - asking pupils to provide feedback on particular lessons
  - conducting regular surveys on the quality of the school experience, and
  - involving pupils in the selection process for new staff.
- New national guidance is being published by the LSC, and will be available from April 2007 in order for all providers to put learner involvement strategies in place by September 2007.
- A curriculum review that is taking place for key stages 3 and 4, to be followed by additional qualifications in Citizenship Studies being available from awarding bodies. Currently there are plans for a full GCSE in Citizenship Studies, in addition to the existing short course, and new A/AS level qualifications in Citizenship Studies (from 2008/9). The importance of education for diversity within the school curriculum has been emphasised by Sir Keith Ajegbo, in his curriculum review, *Diversity and Citizenship*[14]. The vision underpinning the report is *'in five years, for all schools to be actively engaged in nurturing in pupils the skills to participate in an active and inclusive democracy, appreciating and understanding difference.'*

Notes

[1] Based closely on the '7 approaches' identified in the Post-16 Citizenship Development Programme, 2001–2006, and cited in *Play your part: post-16 citizenship*, QCA, 2004

[2] *Getting started with post-16 citizenship*, LSN, 2006

[3] *Play your part: post-16 citizenship*, QCA, 2004

[4] *Taking Post-16 Citizenship Forward: Learning from the Post-16 Citizenship Development projects*, NFER, HMSO, 2004

[5] An evaluation of the post-16 citizenship pilot, 2004/5: a report from Ofsted and the Adult Learning Inspectorate, Ofsted, October 2005

[6] QCA: **www.qca.org.uk/15891.html**

[7] QCA: **www.qca.org.uk/secondarycurriculumreview/lenses/skills/personal-learning/definitions**

[8] *Education for citizenship and the teaching of democracy in schools*, DfEE/QCA, 1998

[9] *Taking Post-16 citizenship Forward: Learning from the Post-16 Citizenship Development Projects*, NFER, Report RR604, 2004 (p.iv)

[10] Citizenship for 16–19 year olds in education and training: report of the Advisory Group to the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, DfEE/FEFC, 2000

[11] 'Raising Skills, Increasing Life Chances', DfES, March 2006, arising out of the Foster review of FE

[12] Realising the potential: a review of the future role of further education colleges, Sir Andrew Foster, DfES, November 2005

[13] 2020 Vision – Report of the Teaching and Learning in 2020 Review Group chaired by Christine Gilbert, DfES, December 2006, PPOAK/D16/1206/53

[14] *Diversity and Citizenship*, Sir Keith Ajegbo, Dr. Dina Kiwan and Seema Sharma, DfES, January 2007, PPSLS/D35/0107/14

References and resources

Play your part: post-16 citizenship. Guidelines for providers of post-16 citizenship programmes, QCA, 2004 (**www.qca.org.uk/post16index.html**)

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Young People as Researchers: a learning resource pack, The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2000). Save the Children (Telephone: 020 7703 5400).

Companion resource – *Involving Young Researchers: how to enable young people to design and conduct research*, Perpetua Kirby. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Keeping it Safe: a young person-centred approach to safety and child protection, standards and guidelines (2002), National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (Telephone: 020 7422 8630).

Action for Change, Will Ord, Don Rowe and the Trust for the Study of Adolescence (2003). National Youth Agency (ISBN: 0 86155 276 8)

Research for Development: A Practical Guide, Sophie Laws (2003). Sage Publications, with Save the Children (ISBN: 0 76197 327 3).

Making a Success of Youth Action, Richard Parsons, NYA (**www.nya.org.uk**)

A longitudinal Study of Young people's Involvement in Social Action (report submitted to ESRC, June 2002), Dr Debi Roker and Karen Eden, Trust for the Study of Adolescence (available at **www.post16citizenship.org.uk**)

Useful websites

www.bbc.co.uk/keyskills/extra/index.shtml – top tips for research, referencing different sources.

www.studygs.net – a range of study guides of relevance to project work.

Available from the Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme (www.post16citizenship.org)

Post-16 Citizenship: what? why? how? (VHS video and CD-ROM), LSDA (now LSN), 2004

Citizenship Uncovered (DVD), LSDA (now LSN), 2006

Make it happen: effective practice in post-16 citizenship (VHS video/DVD), LSDA (now LSN), 2005

Making it click: an interactive guide to post-16 citizenship (CD-ROM), LSDA (now LSN), 2005

Staff development for post-16 citizenship, LSDA (now LSN), 2005

Agree to disagree: citizenship and controversial issues, LSDA (now LSN), 2005

The real picture: citizenship through photography, LSDA (now LSN), 2004

More than words: citizenship through art, LSDA (now LSN), 2005

Get up, stand up: citizenship through music, LSDA (now LSN), 2005

Reality check: citizenship through simulation, LSDA (now LSN), 2006

Choosing an angle: citizenship through video production, LSDA (now LSN), 2006

Getting the show on the road: skills for planning and running citizenship events, LSN, 2006

For the sake of argument: discussion and debating skills in citizenship, LSN, 2006

'We all came here from somewhere': diversity, identities and citizenship, LSN, 2006

Getting started with post-16 citizenship, LSN, 2006

More than profit: work, social enterprise and citizenship, LSN 2007

A case for action? Skills for active citizenship research, LSN 2007

Post-16 citizenship in school sixth-forms: an introduction to effective practice, LSN 2007

Post-16 citizenship in colleges: an introduction to effective practice, LSN 2007

Post-16 citizenship in work-based learning: an introduction to effective practice, LSN 2007

Post-16 citizenship in youth and community groups: an introduction to effective practice, LSN 2007

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